

**VERMONT COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN
VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

ANNUAL SPRING CONFERENCE

TRANSFORMATION:

The Essentials for Success: One School District's Journey

Joseph Sassone

May 2, 2008

Lake Morey Resort

Fairlee, VT

Joseph Sassone of Tucson, Arizona, joined WestEd's Local Accountability Professional Series (LAPDS) in 2006 to bring his expertise in building effective school intervention systems to extend WestEd services in accountability.

As an LAPDS client, Sassone led his district to fully implement the district accountability system and moved district performance from the lowest in the Tucson Valley to the highest with special recognition by the Arizona Department of Education for exemplary growth in student performance in just four years.

Prior to joining WestEd, Sassone served as Assistant Superintendent of Vail (Arizona) Unified School District, where he led the district's accountability reform initiative to increase student achievement. Over three years this initiative moved a rapidly growing school district (8,200 students) from mediocrity to one of highest performing school districts in Arizona.

Under Sassone's leadership, the district initiative involved the following: Established essential standards K-12 in reading, math, writing, science, social studies, and technology; developed proficiency levels to measure student progress; implemented benchmark assessments in reading, math, science, and writing for grades 2 through 10; established school wide common formative assessments in reading and math for grades K through 12; implemented re-teach and enrichment programs at the elementary, middle, and high school level; developed school-level accountability for students at risk of failure; developed model products in reading and language arts aligned with NAEP; created an Achievement Teacher position for every school in the district to facilitate data team meetings; and implemented a district wide Response To Intervention (RTI) model aligned to essential standards with the special education department.

Under Sassone's leadership, the district's students excelled well above the state average in the following areas:

- Over 45% of the students district wide exceeded the standard on the Arizona state assessment in math grades 3 through 7 for three straight years. ?
- Nine out of twelve schools recognized as "excelling" and three out of twelve recognized as "highly performing" in 2006 by the Arizona Department of Education. ?
- Three grade levels in the district had 100% of the students pass the state assessment. ?
- Mesquite Elementary School recognized as an A+ School in 2004, Spot Light Success Award in 2004, Golden Bell Award in 2004 and 2004 Principal of the Year. ?
- Golden Bell Award by Arizona School Board Association for dramatically increasing student achievement in a school district.

Before Sassone served as the Assistant Superintendent, he served as the Director of Human Resources, recruiting over 100 teachers per year for a rapidly growing school district. He also implemented a robust new teacher induction program with cognitive coaching in early literacy, math, and essential elements of instruction. Throughout his career in the Vail Unified School District, Sassone was an instructor for pre-service undergraduates teacher candidates in his specialty of classroom instruction. He also taught a graduate level course in leadership for prospective building principals.

During 1997 –1999, Sassone served as an Assistant Principal in the King Park (New York) Central School District, where he implemented a district-wide new teacher induction and cognitive coaching program. He also served as an assistant principal of an early learning center, high school and middle school. He served as the administrator in charge of the English as a second language program district wide.

During 1992 – 1997, Sassone served as a school counselor in the Northport-East Northport (New York) Union Free School District, where he implemented programs for students at risk of failure and the first new teacher and cognitive coaching program.

During 1991 – 1992, Sassone served as a special education teacher and counselor for the Culpeper (Virginia) School District.

Sassone received a BA in human relations from St. Joseph's College and an MS in school counseling and a Professional Degree in administration and leadership from Long Island University.

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JOSEPH SASSONE
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AGENDA: May 2, 2008

8:15-9:00	Registration
9:00-9:10	Welcome and Introductions – Richard Boltax, Vermont Dept. of Education
9:10-10:30	Presentation by Joseph Sassone
10:30-10:45	Break
10:45-11:45	Continuation Presentation/Training – Joseph Sassone
11:45-12:00	Presentation of Robert T. Stafford Distinguished Service Awards in Special Education
12:00-1:00	Lunch
1:00-2:15	Continuation Presentation/Training – Joseph Sassone
2:15-2:30	Break
2:30-3:00	Participant Questions

TARGET AUDIENCE

Regular, Title I and Special Educators K-12, Parents, Administrators, Guidance Counselors, Related Service Providers, Educational Support Team Members, Curriculum Coordinators K-12, School Board Members

For more information contact Mary Barton – (W) 802-875-4159, (H) 802-228-8105

NAME: _____	Return Registration to:
ADDRESS: _____	VCEC
_____	c/o Ellyn Gould
_____	Green Mt. Union H.S.
	716 VT RTE 103 S.
	Chester, VT 05143
PHONE: (H) _____	Fax: 802-875-3183
(W) _____	

DISTRICT:_____

Please make checks payable to Vermont Council for Exceptional Children. Registration covers lunch and refreshments.

Cost of Conference: \$125.00 Purchase Orders will be accepted.

Check if you need to have any of the following available:

_____**Sign Language Interpretation** _____**Other (Explain)**

Please Return Registration by April 23, 2008